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1646: 1-5
A
FVLL and FAITHFVLL
ACCOMPT

Of the Passages betwixt the Parish of Michaels
Cornhill (met in a Vestry) the Ministers and Elders of the
fourth Classis of the Province of London, and Mr.
J. Symonds, late of Rotterdam in Holland, touching
his admission to the Expository Lecture in that
Parish in the room of Mr. Burroughs deceased.

PUBLISHED,

In the name, and by the unanimous consent of the
Classis met at the Vestry of Mary-as-Hill, Febr. 1. 1646.
as a remedy against the manifold misreports and censures too
confidently delivered by some, and too credulously received
by others, concerning the beginning, proceeding
and conclusion of that motion.

By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and
yet true, 2 Cor. 6. 8.

Apud Christianos non qui patitur, sed qui facit contumeliam miser est. Hieron.
Marco Presbytero Celedensi. Rom. 2. p. 315.

At a meeting of the fourth Classis, Feb. 1. 1646.

Resolved upon the Question, Nemine contradicente,
That this Vindication of the Vestry of Michaels Cornhill, and the
fourth Classis of the Province of London, concerning the motion
of Mr. Symonds to bee Lecturer in that Parish, bee presented to
some of the Licencers for the Presse, and forthwith printed.

Subscribed by order of the fourth Classis, By W. Wickins
Scribe to the said Classis.

12-14-66
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injurious operations whereto they tend, and since there want not those who have thought us as much too remisse, as others have reported us too rigid in our dealing with Mr. Symonds, wee conceive it a part of that duty which we owe To the truth of the cause; To our owne integritie in the carriage of it; To the honour of the Government wherewith wee are intrusted, and To the desires of divers of our Venerable Brethren, (frequently and affectionately expressed to some of us) to take off the imputations (cast upon the whole businesse and upon the Vestry, and Classis with reference unto it,) by a calme and conscientious relation by what meanes it was presented to us, what entertainment it had amongus, and how it was at last dismissed by us; which was in this manner.

When the Ministers and other members of the fourth Classis of the Province of London were come together, to consult of such things as appertained to their association, one of the Elders produced a paper sent to the Classis from the Vestry of Michaels Cornhill, who met the third of December, 1645. and at that meeting agreed and ordered That Deputy Mosse, Collonell Bellamy, and Mr. James Martin should represent unto the Classis (of which that Parish is a part) the desire of the subscribers to the exposition Lectures, for the setting Mr. Symonds in the place of Mr. Burroughs deceased, and to report back to the Parish at a Vestry (called for that purpose) the result of the said Classis concerning the same businesse. And that all such as can informe any thing that may concerne the same may have libertie to appeare before the said Classis to speake what they know therein.

On Munday
Decemb. 7.

Mr. M.R.

To which paper after it was read, a reverend Minister of his acquaintance made answer,

First, by commendation of Mr. Symonds for his Ministeriall gifts, and good disposition; And

Secondly, by way of exception against him, for holding a loose opinion touching liberty of conscience, and toleration of different religions, contrary to the solemn Vow and Covenant of the three Kingdomes; which taken into debate as in order to an answer of advice for the case in question, and not otherwise, the unanimous consent of the Classis was set downe in two particulars.

First, That the snall determination of any thing concerning Mr. Symonds bee deferred untill the Classis may bee satisfied that hee is orthodox in judgement.

Secondly, That untill a seiled Lecturer bee chosen, and approved of by the Classis, the names of those that supply the said Lecture bee given in

to the Presbytery of the said Parish five dayes before, that they may approve of him or them. At the first a dayes warning was propounded, but it was moved by a another reverend Divine well affected to Mr. Symonds, and to that Lecture likewise, that it might bee five dayes before, that if any named to the Elders were upon just cause denied by them, there might bee competent time to procure a supply by some other.

Mr. I. C.

And this as it was desired in favour both to the Lecture and Lecturer Mr. Symonds, so was it out of good will to both, and to him that made the motion, readily resolved on by the *Classis*, and presently drawne up into an order by the Scribe. The word *Order* (by the way) doth import no more power then a *Vote* (which is the result of their minds who are the major part of the meeting) but onely more union when the resolution is made with a *nemine contradicente*; and that this and no more was the mind of the *Classis*, that is, to answer a request for advice by giving advice as the case required, was expressly and with joynt consent professed by all the Brethren in the next Classicall meeting, December the 22. 1646. which should the rather be taken for an advice, then a rule or binding order, because the motion was presented not from a Parochiall or Congregationall Presbytery, but from a Vestry, which stands in no such direct subordination to a *Classis* as the Parochiall Presbytery doth. And could they doe lesse in dutie to God, in conscience to the Covenant, in religious prudence, and Christian charitie to their Brethren? They did, and doe conceive they might have done more by vertue of the Ordinance of Parliament for ordination of Ministers Aug. 28. 1646, which, in the comprehensive sense of it, they take to extend unto Lecturers, that they are to come under the same course of admission and approbation with other Ministers removing from one place to another.

1646.
Decemb, 22d.

This interpretation they were taught to make of the Ordinance by the practise of the Honorable Committee for plundered Ministers, and confirmed in it by the judgement and proceeding of their Reverend Brethren in a neighbour *Classis*.

First, for the Committee, though the Order by which they sit, bearing date July 27. 1643. expressly mention their nomination of Ministers to a Parsonage or Benefice, naming none other, yet they take the same course with Lecturers that come to their cognizance, that is, they send them for approbation to the Assembly of Divines; so was Mr. Simpson (Mr. Symonds his especiall friend) sent with an

Order to the Assembly for a Lecture at Dulwich in Surrey, and since again (and that very lately) there was the like reference of him to the Assembly for his setting up a Lecture in *Summer-set-house* in the Strand; and this week the like Order was sent from the same Committee to the Assembly, for examination and approbation of a very Orthodox and well approved Presbyterian, Mr. F. R. for his admission to a Lecture in *East-Greenwich*.

Secondly, for the judgement and practise of the neighbour Classis, that is legible in a Letter written from Mr. J. C. to Mr. Sp. in these words,

Sir, *You having been chosen Lecturer by the Company of Mercers in the Parish of Bartholomew the Exchange; I am desired by our Classis at our meeting, December 2. 1646. to signify to you, that it is ordered, That you forbear execution of any Ministeriall function there, untill you have submitted your self to the examination of our Classicall Presbytery, according to the Ordinance of Parliament in such cases provided.* Sir, I rest
Yours J. C.

And for the proceedings of them both, there is very good reason; for if Lecturers should be exempt from the rules prescribed in the Ordinance, there might bee so many of them set up to cry down what is established (according to the Word of God, and by authority of Parliament,) both in Doctrine and in government, as would amount to the most dangerous kinde of toleration that could bee.

The administration of the Sacraments (the other chief part of the Ministers commission) nor any act else which Lecturers leave to incumbent Pastors to perform, are of such either use or force for good or evill as preaching is, thereafter as it is managed by men, whether of sound or unsound apprehensions in matters of Religion.

Nor did the *Classis* overdoe their duty, in giving cautionary advice concerning such as should bee set up to preach in *Mr. Symonds* his stead, since a substitute (if hee bee not Orthodox) may mislead the people, and disturb their peace, as well as he whose place he supplyeth; and it hath been observed in this City, that for some Lecturers, * such have been taken to preach in their absence, as have been articulated against for erroneous and dangerous opinions, and for them, and for miscarriages answerable to them, upon conviction have been censured by publique Authority.

And on this Lecture both the Vestry of *Michaels Cornhill* and the

* Mr. Symps.
the Antinom.
for Mr. Cr.

the Classis had reason to looke with a more observant eye for two causes especially.

1. Because the most of those, who have the chiefe hand in the choice of the men, and procurement of the maintenance for that and such like Lectures, shew no minde to admit of any Presbyterian, how godly and well gifted soever, to read or preach them as in an ordinary course.

Secondly, Because these Lectures are not (as many others) *Parochiall*, set up for the benefit, or maintained at the charge of a particular Parish or Parishioner, but rather *provinciall*, both for the people of all Parishes in the City to be present at them, and contributors to them.

Yet was this act of the Classis so offensively taken by some, that they spake against it as a Presbyteriall presumption, and severity, of a farre higher and harsher straine then prelaticall usurpation: one saying, *the Order was as high as Pauls steeple*; another, *that it was ten times more rigid then the practice of the prelates, who never put any to five dayes premonition for taking of a turne in any Lecture*; and some talked of complaining to the Parliament, as if it were a presage, the Presbyterians taking so much upon them in their first Classicall Assembly, would bee like (in time to come, if they were not curbed by the supreme power of the kingdome) to transcend the prelaticall tyranny, as much as *Rehoboam* threatned to exceed the severity of *Solomon*, when hee said, *My little finger shall bee thicker then my fathers loines*, 1 King. 12. 10. when all was no more then might have beene done by a particular Minister, or private Christian, if hee had beene consulted with as the Classis was.

For which of them may not give an advice to them that aske it? Do not they who for this take offence at the Classis, take much more upon them, when without any authority at all (for ought yet appeareth) they gather Churches out of Churches, admit of Members with a speciall Covenant, set up these expository Lecturers, make choyce of the men, and change the times and places of their preaching at their pleasure? And for this last particular, if all that are able and willing to bee at cost with a Lecturer of their owne election, should use the like liberty, there would bee many a dangerous stumbling blocke layed in the way of the weak; who, not able to judge of diversity of Doctrines, might take meere blasphemy for Orthodox Divinity, as the *Antitrinitarians*, *Antiscripturists*, *Enthusiasts*, and other Hereticks doe; and might perhaps become such proficients.

ficients from bad to worse, as to bee brought at last to thinke it a service to God to kill his servants, as our Saviour foretold of some in the 16 of *John v. 2.* by which expression, wee desire not to put any suspicion of sinfull compliyance with such desperate Dogmatists upon our dissenting brethren, (who we doubt not abhorre such impieties as wee doe,) but to note the ill consequence which is like to fall out, if in these times, so luxurient in pernicious opinions, Lecturers should be left out of the rule of the Ordinance, and come under no tryall of their qualifications or Tenets, but as *sui juris*, should bee allowed to set up office, and exercise, when and where they thinke meet, without accompt to any, or consent of any but themselves, and those who subscribe to their salarie.

Among whom, though some out of an equall excesse of love to *Independency*, & of dislike to the *Presbytery*, take more liberty to traduce and censure the *Vestry* and *Classis* as associated together, then Christianity would allow of, though but against one Minister or Elder taken singly by himselfe, yet would not the *Classis* thereby be provoked out of their soft pace of patience and moderation towards Master *Symonds*, and therefore hearing hee was come to *London* to carry on the *Lecture*, (as Master *Burroughes* had done) at their next meeting, which was *Jan: 4. 1646.* they appointed Master *Ley* with two more of their Members *Colonell Hooker*, and *Colonell Bellamy* to acquaint Master *Symonds* with the Ordinance of Parliament, for ordination of Ministers, with reference to his choyce to be expository Lecturer in Master *Burroughes* his place at *Michaels Cornhill*. Whereupon on Wednesday *Jan: 6.* Master *Symonds* coming to visit Master *Bellamy* at his owne house, hee told him the aforesaid resolution of the *Classis*, and desired him to nominate a time and place for that purpose, that they which were appointed by the *Classis* might come unto him; but with respect to Master *Ley*, Master *Symonds* desired him to appoint the time and place, and hee would give them the meeting there. And on Thursday *Jan: 7.* they made choyce of Friday *Jan: 8.* at 3 of the Clocke in the afternoon at Master *Leyes* house, and sent present word thereof to Master *Symonds*, but hee made answer by the Messenger of the *Classis*, That hee could not possibly come at that time, because hee was in an unsettled condition, and hee had other occasions which hee was to goe about at that time, but hee had declared his minde in full to Master *Bellamy*, so that hee could certifie them as much as if hee were there himselfe; but when hee was a little settled he would come to Master *Leyes* house, and satisfie him in any thing that he did desire.

This

This Message was brought to Master Ley who presently sent him backe that brought it with a request to Master Symonds, that himselfe would prescribe both time and place, since that choyce made without him was so inconvenient for his occasions. To that hee made retourne that he was sorry Master Ley should trouble himselfe so much to send to him so often, but truly hee could not possibly appoint either an houre or day when they should come to him, or hee to them, in regard of the unsettlednesse of his condition, because hee was but lately come over and had no habitation of his owne, and his bookes and other things lay some in one place and some in another, and hee was going about to look for a place to settle himselfe in; and till then hee entreated them to forbear him; Besides this hee said (as before) hee had made his minde knowne so fully to Master Bellamy, that hee could satisfie Master Ley as much as if hee spake with him himselfe: neverthelesse so soone as hee was in any settled condition, hee would repaire to Master Leys lodging, and satisfie him in any thing that hee should desire.

Where that hee saith of Master Leys troubling himselfe so much, was but his curtesie to him, that hee might trouble him the lesse, and his duty to the *Classis*, having undertaken the service upon their appointment, and being to give an accompt thereof at the next *Classicall* meeting.

Notwithstanding this Master Symonds came on Friday forementioned to Master Leys house, and of the two Colonels, one came with him, the other met him there, but Master Ley having no intimation at all of the change of his minde, and having businesse at *Westminster* which detained him till night, (which yet hee would have dispensed with if hee had knowne Master Symonds like the better son in the parable, *Mat: 21. 28, 29.* would have beene better then his word) came not home untill they were gone, though they staid somewhat long.

This absence of Master Ley (from the place and time of his owne and his Collegues choyce) was so farre mistaken and misreported by some, as if hee had carelesly failed, or purposely falsified his word with those hee should have met; and by Master Symonds his speech to the subscribers at Master *Shutes* house, it was so conceived by the hearers, because hee concealed his former refusall to give meeting that day, and the change of his minde, which was altogether unknowne to Master Ley, untill at his retourne hee was told they had beene at his house, but before hee came had departed thence.

The next day being Jan. 9. Mr. Symonds wrote this ensuing Letter to Mr. Bellamy.

For

For Colonell Bellamy his good friend.

Sir, understanding that such a report of mee came to your parish, lest it might worke a disaffection against me, I held it fit to intreat you to doe mee the favour to relate to them what I said to you, and to present my respects to them, and my desire and hope that they will bee pleased to grant me their consent to preach in their Church, as formerly they did to Mr. Burroughs I held it meet to give them this due respect, and so I rest,

Yours in Christ to serve you, J. Symonds.

The Letter is short, too short to be well understood without some supply, which is thus to be made out. *Sir, understanding such a report of me, that is, of holding for toleration of diversitie of religions, came to your Parish. It was five dayes before related in the Classis, and upon that ground the advice was given to the Parish of Michaels Cornhill at the same time, but Mr. Symonds by this would take no notice of that: I intreat you to doe mee the favour to relate to them what I said to you; which was for substance the same that he afterward returned to the three messengers together, and that's delivered in the ensuing relation. Hee was unwilling it seemes to commit to writing either the report or his Apology, for reasons best knowne unto himselfe. And for his desire and hope that they would grant him their consent, thereto the answer returned (the next day after the date of this Letter) was as followeth.*

At a Vestry held the tenth of January 1646. in the Church of Michaels Cornhill London.

Forasmuch as the businesse concerning Mr. Symonds being Lecturer here is depending before the Classis, yet undecided, therefore at this Vestry it is conceived unfitting to proceed any further therein, but leave it to the Classis who are desired to determine the same; and that if the Classis should resolve of his admittance, and thereof signifie so much to us, wee shall bee willing to accept of him, and in the meane time wee desire him to forbear.

Untill this time there was no fit opportunity for the Messengers Master L. Colonell H. and Colonell B. (according to the Order of the Classis) to deliver their Message to Master Symonds, and the Lecture day drawing on, Master B. Bellamy came very late to Master Ley (the night after the Vestry had made their resolution forementioned, viz. Jan. 10.) to consult about a visit of Master Symonds on the morrow being the next day before hee was expected to enter upon the expository Lecture. But that (upon consideration) was conceived unseasonable. for it was very probable in their apprehensions

hensions that the matter was already resolved on betwixt Mr. Symonds and his principall Auditors, and then if upon their coming his mind should have beene changed, and the people disappointed of the Lecture, it would bee imputed to them with as harsh a censure as passed on the Order of the Classis before, but with louder clamour, since the provocation would bee more publique, more generall, and it may bee also by union (at their meeting together) more violent; and on the contrary, if hee should preach after they had been with him, it would haply bee said they had approved of him, (which they could not doe before they had imparted their message, and reported his answer to the Classis, and heard their judgement upon it) or that hee and his party had contemned the Classis; and therefore it was thought best to leave him to the resolution of his owne counsell and choyce; which though it were with some doubting for a time, was settled at last for his preaching, at his owne Letter to Mr. Ley sheweth in these words.

To his Reverend friend Mr. Ley Minister at St. Mary Hill.

Sir, fearing misstructions of an act of mine this day, and desiring to carry all things in love and peace, I held it meet to give you an account as to a Brother of the businesse; Sir, the Pariss in Cornhill did desire mee to forbear preaching till your Classis had determined, and I did fully intend it, yea I did not so much as make the least preparation, being unwilling to take any way but that which might bee with most peace, though they that were deputed with you to speake with mee did declare that they were satisfied, and that I might preach: I sent this morning to Colomell Bellamy to know if I might preach, and found I might not; upon this I held off all thoughts of preaching. About two of the Clock some told mee people gathered but the doores were kept shut, upon which I sent againe to Col. Bellamy to know whether the doores should bee opened if I came, (which I did to keepe peace) his answer was bee could say nothing to it, or to that purpose: afterwards one brought word the doores were opened, and the people sitting in expectation of mee; whereupon I went, having no time to recollect thoughts; and in the simplicitie of my heart, God knoweth, I took this as an unquestionable evidence that the Pariss had consented; and I was glad to goe, hoping it would prevent much unquietnesse in the Citie. But I perceive now it is otherwise in that Pariss. It is true when I was in the Church, and going to the pulpit, the Clarke did pray mee not to preach, and bee contrary; but I did it, being earnestly pressed, fearing it would have savoured ill if the people had beene turned backe. Sir, I have dealt candidly with

you, that you may both know and make knowne my action in the reason of it and my end; I beseech you take this in love from

Your Brother and servant in Christ, *J. Symonds.*

This Letter was brought to Mr. L. upon Tuesday night, *Jan. 12.* by Mr. Pocock his son, (at whose house hee then lodged;) by whom Mr. L. signified to Mr. Symonds that if hee would yet name the time and place, himselfe with the other two members of the *Classis*, Col. Hooker and Col. Bellamy would come to him; but hee made no returne to Mr. Symonds in writing,

First, because hee had no authoritie to treat with him alone in that businesse.

Secondly, for that the state of the question seemed now to him to bee much changed from what it was, and so to bee fit for a new consultation of the *Classis*.

Yet conceiving it to bee necessary to find a time to speake with him before the next *Classicall* Assembly, they consulted againe about it, and after mutuall premonition betwixt Mr. Symonds and them they resolved upon Friday morning, *Jan. 15.* at eight of the Clock to goe to him at his lodgings, and accordingly they did so; where they told him that the Ministers and Elders of the *Classis* appointed them to acquaint him with two particulars, the one was the Ordinance of Parliament touching ordination of Ministers, *Aug. 28. 1646.* wherein it is provided, that every person, formerly ordained a Presbyter according to the forme of ordination which hath bene hold in the Church of England, and is to bee removed to another charge, bring to the Presbytery where he is to bee placed, if there bee any, and if not, then to some other Presbytery a Testimoniall of his Ordination, and of his abilities and conversation, whereupon his fitness for that place to which hee is to bee removed shall bee tryed by his preaching there, and (if it shall bee judged necessary) by a further examination.

The other particular was a report that hee was of opinion for toleration of different religions, not onely of Brownists, Anabaptists and Familists on the one hand, but of Papists on the other, and thereupon hee was desired to returne his resolution whether hee would enter upon the Lecture according to the Tenour of the Ordinance, and give the right hand of fellowship to his brethren of the *Classis*, and so manage his Ministry in that Lecture as might most conduce to the edification of the people, the furtherance of the reformation set on foot, and the preservation of the peace of the Church and State; and that what answer so ever

it pleased him to give to these particulars it is left to his libertie to give it by them who were sent from the *Classis*, or to bring it himselfe, or to send it in writing to them at their next meeting.

Hee replied hee would give answer by them that brought the message, and then spake to three points.

First, to the reason of his removall out of *Holland* into *England*.

Secondly, to the report of his opinion for toleration of diversitie of Religions.

Thirdly, to his resolution required touching conforming to the Ordinance.

For the first, hee made a very sad and sensible declaration of the destitution of his bodily health, and indisposition of the faculties of his mind, (and sometimes also of his speech) for his Ministeriall function in *Holland*, proceeding from the violence of the *Flatus hypochondriacus* (a melancholick windinesse of the spleene from the distemper of the *diaphragma* or Midriffe, and from the palpitation of the heart, and other symptoms of sicknesse inclining to an Apoplexy) which hee imputed principally to the ayre of *Holland*, and conceived that the ayre of his native Country would cure him of these diseases; and hee had (as hee said) experience to confirme him in that conceit, because upon the changes of ayre hee presently perceived very great changes in the constitution of his body for the better, (when hee came out of *Holland* into *England*) for the worse (when hee returned thence to *Holland* againe.)

Secondly, for the report, hee said that hee never preached any such doctrine as hee was charged withall; It was answered the charge was not raised so high as the Pulpit, for it was said but that he spake it or wrote it to a friend in a Letter, yet if hee held such a Tenet (though yet his preaching of it could not bee proved) hee might haply preach it hereafter. Hee replied that hee had preached the contrary this last yeere, and had condemned toleration of diversitie of Religions in foure cases, which were these, viz when it is

- Repugnant {
1. To the Faith.
 2. To godlinesse of life.
 3. To humane societie.
 - And
 4. To civill authoritie.

And for the Letter which * was published by Mr. *Edwards* wherein the writer saith of Mr. *Symonds*, I beare that Mr. *Symonds* hath written to his Congregation here very confidently that toleration shall be granted,

* The Copy of a letter written from a godly Minist: in *Holland* to some reverend and godly Ministers here in *London*, Third part of the *Generall*, p. 165.

even with these termes *in spight of them who have enterprised the contrary*. Hee disavowed the allegation both for words and matter, acknowledging no more but that in a Letter to a friend hee had intimated an hope of good compliance, and mutuall forbearance of brethren, (notwithstanding some differences in judgement and practice in points of lesse moment then those forementioned) and that hee would endeavour to preserve Christian concord both amongst Ministers and People in the exercise of his Ministry.

And for the third, hee said hee tooke it, that his case was not within the compasse of the Ordinance, because hee was not to take upon him a pastorall charge, whereas the Ordinance speaks not of a pastor but of a Presbyter, and wee conceive Master Symonds to bee such an one, and though it mention a charge, yet doth it not specifie a *pastorall charge*, but leaveth the word *charge* in such a latitude as may take in undertakings of very distinct and different kinds, and so wee finde it in the scripture, as the charge of the sonnes of Gerson was the *Tabernacle*, and the *Tent*, and the covering thereof, and the hanging for the doore of the *Tabernacle*, Numb: 3. 25. The charge of the *Cohabites* was the *Arke*, and the *Table*, and the *Candlesticke*, and the *Altars*, and the vessels of the *Sanctuary*, and the hangings, and all the service thereof, v: 31. The charge of the *Levites* for killing the *Passover*, 2 Chron: 30. 17. and the charge of the decree for destruction of the *Jewes*, Esai: 3. 9. These differ more then a Lecture doth from a parochiall incumbency, yet all of them are comprehended in the name of a charge; but if the Ordinance had expressly named a *pastorall charge*, a *parsonage* or *benefice*, the intent and scope of the Ordinance might, and in reasonable construction, should reach also to a *Lecture*, as hath beene formerly shewed in defence of the advice given to the Vekry of *Michael Cornehill*, in the Order of the *Classis*.

Object: But though the Ordinance reach to a Lecturer obliging him with others to give an accompt, it reacheth not unto a *Classis*, say some, to authorise them to take the accompt either of a Lecturer or Beneficed pastor, but to the Presbytery where they are to officiate.

Answer: First, if there bee no Presbytery there, then the Ordinance saith the testimoniall may bee tendred to, and the tryall made by some other Presbytery, and that Presbytery may bee *Classicall*, as well as *Congregationall*; and rather *Classicall*, because *Classicall* Presbyteries have power to constitute Presbyteries *Congregationall*,

nall; and in defect of them, Parishes are to bee immediately under the Classis within whose circuit they are situate, according to the directions of the Lords and Commons *Die Martii 19 Augusti 1645.* for the election of Elders, p.8.9. and such was the condition of *Michaels Cornhill* at that time when they made their first motion of the matter unto the Classis concerning *Master Symonds*.

Secondly, If their Presbytery had bene perfect in the constitutive Members thereof, they might in a case of doubtfull debate, (as that was about the preaching place for the new Lecturer) desire the advice of the Classis, and the Classis might as well returne their advice as they require it at their hands upon the ground and evidence formerly alleadged. Howsoever *Master Symonds* promised that if he tooke upon him a pastorall charge of a particular Congregation, he would make his entrance into it by the way of the Ordinance. In the meane time if in his Lecture he said any thing contrary to faith or godlinesse or tending to a disturbance of humane society, or the Civill state, he would be ready to give an accompt thereof to the Classicall Assembly.

And hee concluded with a complaint that hee was not well dealt withall, neither by the Vestry of *Michaels Cornhill*, (because as hee said, hee should have bene advertised by them of the exception against him in private before they presented it to the Classis in publique) Nor by the Classis, because they should have done the like before they had ordered any thing against his admission, especially since being a Presbyter, an accusation should not have bene received but under two or three witnesses.

Whereto for the Vestry of *Michaels Cornhill*, *Master Bellamy* one of that society said that hee must cleare the Vestry from that charge, and if there were any fault in acquainting the Classis with it hee must take it to himselfe so farre as to confesse hee was the first mover thereof, but he hoped for that hee had not done amisse, as hee was assured hee had no meaning therein to doe any thing to the prejudice either of the Lecture or Lecturer there, and for what hee did hee had this inducement; (which he conceived both weighty in reason and warrantable in conscience) In the debate of the matter, hee observed the sway of affections (besides the difference of judgements) to grow to some heate, which did not tend to a settlement on such a conclusion as might bee like to preserve the peace of the parish; therefore hee propounded, and thereto both parties assented, to make an addresse to the Classis about it, and to desire from them advice for the determination of that difference which

could not bee so well composed among themselves. Thus for the objection to the Vestry in *Cornhill*.

And for the *Classis* Master *Lev* (if the time had permitted) would have put in an Apology; but he was in *haste*, (having staid beyond his hour for his necessary attendance at the Assembly,) and in hope of another opportunity, which would bee most seasonable, when the objection had bene proposed to the *Classis*, as since it hath bene, and their answer to it is, That the accusation was not received in the sence of the Apostle, *1 Tim: 5. 19.* that is, not so farre beleived, as upon it to proceed to any judicall examination of the prooffe, or censure of the party against whom it was made; but was rather suspended for the clearing of Master *Symonds* if hee were innocent, then admitted as a convincing evidence against him. And if the witness were but one, as hee said, there was such weight in that one as might well put both the Vestry and *Classis* to a pause touching his approbation, though not to a repulse of him in their finall resolution.

But yet there was more then a single testimony in the charge, when besides the saying of that knowne witness there was a letter alleadged in the *Classis* sounding to the like sence, the prooffe whereof, was afterwards offered to some of the *Classis* by a Reverend Minister. Neverthelesse the *Classis* gave so much credit to Master *Symonds* his answer, as to conceive that whatsoever his opinion was in former times hee was now Orthodox, in judgement against such a toleration as was objected unto him; and therefore upon due consideration of what was reported to them by their Messengers, Jan: 10. they resolved, *That notwithstanding some informations from very good hands concerning Master Symonds opinion for toleration of diversity of Religion; (Popery not excepted) having now received by way of answer from his owne mouth (made to such as were sent from the Classis to conferre with him about it) that he disavoweth that opinion, and averreth that hee hath preached the contrary doctrine this last summer, when the same shall bee testified under his hand to the Classis, they are willing and doe give advice to the Parish of Michaels Cornhill to admit him to preach the expository Lecture in the said Church, as Master Burroughs lately did.*

If they had further advised that the Vestry of Michaels Cornhill should not accept of him for a Lecturer in their Church untill hee had disclaimed Independency, or engaged his promise against gathering of Churches, they had acted but according to the temper
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of their zeale, who are not pleased with the proceedings of the Vestry and Classis in Master *Symonds* his cause; And if their zeale for Presbytery had gone a quicker pace then theirs for Independency, it had been much more warrantable in them, since Presbytery (with the graduall subordinations, Congregationall, Classicall, Provinciall, and Nationall,) is set up by the supreme Judicatory of the kingdom, and thereby is Independency at least virtually put downe.

But because *first*, Master *Symonds* was not for the present resident within the limits of the fourth Classis, nor *secondly*, limited for the Lecture either to that or any other particular Church; *thirdly*, for that he was represented unto many of the brethren (by such as well knew him) as a man of a quiet and peaceable spirit, and was so apprehended and reported of by those who by the *Classis* were sent to him, and had conference with him; and *lastly* because hee intimated a motion made to him for taking of a pastorall charge, and shewed no avernesse from acceptation thereof, the *Classis* thought fit to propound none other condition at that time in their advice to the Vestry of *Michaels Cornhill* then the setting done of that under his hand, which hee had said with his tongue, as a double testimony of the integrity of his heart, which they conceived would conduce as much to his own clearing from that impious opinion of toleration of erroneous and hereticall Religions, as for satisfaction of any who did or might take offence at him for such a Tenet.

Upon such reasons as these it was resolved by the Classis not only that their second advice to the Parish of *Michaels Cornhill* should be drawne up into an Order, and sent unto them, but a Copy of it also be transmitted by some of them to the subscribers for that Lecture, at their meeting appointed at Master *Shutes* the Wednesday following at 8. of the Clocke in the morning, where, after some debate of the matter betwixt Master *Symonds* and themselves, they concluded negatively against his writing and subscribing as it was propounded by the Classis, and that if by Saturday following the Parishioners of *Michaels Cornhill* would not yeild to admit him to preach in their Church, (which was contrary to the expresse advice of the Classis sent unto them, and to their owne Resolution upon it, made knowne to Master *Symonds*) that then the Lecture should be renewed, removed, and settled at *Abchurch*. Yet some who were well pleased with the choyce of Master *Symonds* disliked the change of the Church, and therefore (when they saw no
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hope of the subscribers yeelding to Mr. Symonds his giving satisfaction to the *Classis*, and Parish in that particular (and without their consent to have done it might have proved to his losse) some of them dealt with some of the *Classis* to procure another meeting of the Ministers and Elders in a Classicall Assembly before the Sabbath day following, where it should bee propounded to the *Classis* to reverse their late advice to the Parish of *Michaels Cornhill*, and to rest contented with Mr. Symonds his clearing, as it was represented to them by their owne Messengers.

Which was a thing as difficult to bee brought about in so short a time, as unreasonable to bee desired; for why should they bee moved to meet twice in one weeke, who are appointed by the direction of Parliament to meet but once a moneth, though they be permitted by the same Authoritie to assemble more often if they see cause? and why should they bee called together againe so soone to recall that which (upon so just considerations and reasons) was agreed on by them, and without the like inducements was denied by Mr. Symonds and the subscribers to the Lecture? how much more easie and equall had it bene for him and them to have assented to the *Classis* in that they desired, then for the *Classis* without any further correspondence on their part, to renounce their owne deliberate, and (as they yet conceive) well grounded advice, and to lay themselves open thereby to the imputation of levitie, for undoing it; and it may bee also of injury, for what they had done in their precedent proceedings.

It was not then without cause that the Vestry of *Michaels Cornhill* in conformitie to the *Classis* did at their meeting, Jan. 21. (notwithstanding the finall refusal of Mr. Symonds and the subscribers to admit of the condition of his admission the day before) set down their resolution for this matter by a writing of this tenour. Whereas the Parish of *Michaels Cornhill* have received an Order from the *Classis*, touching an acknowledgement to bee made under the hand of Mr. Symonds and the admission of him to preach the exposition Lecture there, it was this day ordered at a Vestry holden in the said Parish, that Mr. William Rowell and Col. Bellamy shall goe to Mr. Symonds, and signifie to him from the Parish, if hee will subscribe the said acknowledgement in accomplishment of the said Order of the *Classis*, that then the Parishioners are willing and desirous that the said exposition Lecture shall bee by him preached in the said Church.

The messengers according to the Order went to Mr. Sym. his lodging,

ing, but because hee was not then within, they left the Order for him with his wife. In this order it was resolved onely on the *positive* part according to that they received from the Classis, leaving the *negative* to be made up by Mr. Symonds, and them whose counsels are of more value with him then his Presbyteriall Brethrens. Yet however they bee slighted, or censured by them, their purpose is without all uncharitable returns to any of them, (as holding it an happier thing to suffer then to offer or answer a continuely in the same kind) to passe through good report and bad report in the conscionable discharge of that dutie whereto God hath called them, and for which the authoritie of Parliament hath enabled them.

And for such of our brethren as thinke the Classis might and ought to have done more by vertue of the Ordinance, alledging to that purpose the instance in the case of Mr. Sp. forementioned, they shall doe well to consider that the case of Mr. Symonds and his partie is much unlike that of Mr. Sp. and the Company of Mercers; for (to say nothing of the disparitie of the two Divines, whereof the one hath beene accused upon divers Articles exhibited against him to a Committee of Parliament, as the other hath not.)

First, there is a difference of importance betwixt the Patrons of each Lecture. For those who have had most sway in setting up and upholding these expository Lectures are professed Independents, and as such will not submit to any Classicall resolution; The Company of Mercers (for the most part and best sort of them) are for ought wee know regular men, who agree to the Government set up by Ordinance of Parliament, and as such would take a repulse or deniall from a Classis with more patience, then the other will a pause or demurre in that they desire.

Secondly, that Lecture to which Mr. Sp. was nominated might receive a finall determination from that Classis which required his forbearance to preach, because it is confined to *Barbologemens* Church, it being a monethly Lecture set up for Sacramentall preparation there onely, this of Mr. Symonds not so to *Michael Cornhill* but that it may bee as well removed to any other Church, or Classis, of the Province, as renewed there; and therefore the finall ordering thereof doth more properly belong to the Provinciall then to any Classicall Assembly.

Thirdly, there was no need for the fourth Classis to doe more then what they did, since what they have already done (yea their
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first advice alone, received with the left hand though rendered with the right) was enough to provoke, and more would have been too little to prevail with men so resolved to stand out, as the subscribers partly appeared before, but now the event hath more fully discovered. And we hope also by this apologetical report of the truth, equitableness, and moderation of our proceedings with Mr. Symonds will bee so farre cleared to all Religious and impartiall Readers, as that it will not onely confute the falshood of such reports as have passed upon them, but prevent the like, at least the beliefs of them, with the better and wiser sort in time to come.

FINIS.

Thirdly, there was no need for the Church to rise up from what they had already done (see their last

